

Canterbury Earthquake Recovery
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Sustainability and Resilience

Assoc. Prof. Simon Kingham

Dept of Geography and GeoHealth Laboratory

University of Canterbury

Changing society

We live in a world of change and disruption – now and future

- Peak oil
- Climate change
- Earthquakes

Resilient and sustainable communities essential

Increasing reliance on local not global community

"Our lives will become profoundly and intensely local"

- Kames Kunstler, Local Emergency, 2006.

Wide acceptance

"In the first 24-48 hours of a disaster, the community bears the burden of response. It is a fallacy to rely on external help"

- Roderico Ofrinm, WHO SE Asia adviser for emergency and humanitarian action

"The challenge for urban planners will be ... to generate a sense of hope through a combination of new technology, city design and community-based innovation, which together will create the Resilient City."

- Prof Peter Newman, academic & member of Infrastructure Australia

... even in the US

"I encourage all Americans to recognize the importance of preparedness and observe this month by working together to enhance our national security, resilience, and readiness."

- President Barack Obama, Presidential Proclamation, National Preparedness Month, August 27, 2010

"We gotta get off oil, America has got to change its habits,"

- George W. Bush, March 5th 2008

Sustainable resilient communities

What are sustainable resilient communities?

Communities that:

- Are less reliant on fossil fuels
- Produce less harmful outputs (e.g. pollution, carbon)
- Use less finite inputs (e.g. water, energy)
- Reliant on local rather than global goods & services
- Are better able to adapt to change
- Quicker to recover when disrupted

Evidence for existence

Communities can be resilient

- Nov 07-April 08 – Americans drove 30 billion fewer kms than 06-07 (June 08 was peak oil price of \$140 per barrel)
- Sept 4th when EQ hit Christchurch, local communities stepped up
- Growth in *Transition Initiative* communities

Initiatives

Transition Initiatives

- Aim is to equip communities (regions, cities, suburbs) for the dual challenges of climate change and peak oil
 - Can also apply to other challenges e.g. earthquake response and recovery
- Behaviour change is essential
 - Key is to raise awareness of sustainable living
 - Role of government is to facilitate this change among individuals and communities

People who live in local resilient communities:

- Walk and cycle more
 - ✓ Improved health
 - ✓ Better social capital
 - ✓ Other benefits

More co-benefits

Communities that promote active and sustainable transportation can:

- Reduce disparities between the rich and poor
- Promote good neighbourhood
- Enable poor to gain better access to healthy food
- Lead to decreased crime
 - OECD Project on Environmentally Sustainable Transport

Concluding comments

- Resilience \neq sustainable
- Resilience can = sustainable
- Opportunity to rebuild resilient AND sustainable communities
- Concern about 'special powers'
 - Use them
- Outside-the-square thinking needed